

March 13, 2012

To: Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee

Testimony in Support of Raised Bill #352

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I have been a child care provider for twenty years.

The importance of the work I do for children and parents lasts a lifetime. As a provider, I believe we are the children's first teachers. We often begin caring for a child at two or three months old, way before they attend a larger school setting. By the time that child is ready to move into a school, we have worked very closely with the child and parents to educate the play, daily reading, and other activities. The work that I do is very challenging, but it is something that must be done. Typically parents' drop off the children at around 7:00am and pick them up at about 5:30pm. They then go grocery shopping, home to cook, wash up the child and get them ready for bed; just how much time did the parent spend with the child? I guess you never thought about it that way! That's why our job is so very important.

Collective bargaining will help us address challenges that we face as providers.

Statistically, it costs a lot to run any business; a child care business is no different. The Care4Kids reimbursement rates are outdated. As a business owner, it hurts when there is nothing to show and for all the hard work you have done. Let's work together through the collective bargaining process to address these problems so that providers can continue to give the same quality care we have always given.

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